

	West London Economic Prosperity Board 19 November 2024
Title	West London electricity capacity constraints and energy planning
Report of	Molly Strauss, Head of Infrastructure, GLA
Status	Public
Urgent	No
Enclosures	None
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Summary

Electricity capacity constraints in West London are being resolved in the short term through GLA-facilitated solutions, but the long-term issue remains. The first phase of a subregional Local Area Energy Plan (LAEP) has been completed and ongoing implementation studies will help address the issue.

Recommendations

Leaders are asked to:

- a. **note** progress to date in addressing West London electricity capacity issues and progressing the subregional LAEP, and remain aware of long-term issues in this space.
- b. **consider** undertaking final LAEP steps at borough level, with support on offer from the GLA.

1. WHY THIS REPORT IS NEEDED

- 1.1. West London's electricity capacity constraints were first raised by developers in Summer 2022 as a potential barrier to development and decarbonisation in Hounslow, Ealing and Hillingdon.
- 1.2. Work undertaken by the Greater London Authority (GLA) to convene utilities and introduce solutions has unblocked 11,481 homes to date, which represents nearly all of the schemes known to the GLA. However, the issue remains a long-term challenge that Leaders should be aware of.

2. CONTEXT AND PROGRESS

- 2.1. An influx of 'large-demand' developments (e.g. data centres) in Hounslow, Hillingdon and Ealing in recent years created electricity capacity constraints on both the electricity distribution network operated by Scottish and Southern Electricity Network (SSEN) and the transmission network operated by National Grid.
- 2.2. The transmission network is currently scheduled for upgrade in 2037. However, the GLA has facilitated a range of short and medium-term solutions to alleviate constraints so that housing and decarbonisation technologies (e.g. electric vehicle charge points) can secure a connection in the interim.
- 2.3. The GLA has [published](#) four public documents on this topic. The most recent update was released in [March 2024](#) and covers the latest solutions available.
- 2.4. The Mayor has also funded development of a [Subregional Local Area Energy Plan](#) (LAEP) in collaboration with West London Alliance (WLA) boroughs, alongside two other boroughs and OPDC. An LAEP is intended to translate Net Zero targets into on-the-ground action. LAEPs are a key input into electricity networks' planning processes and can alter the amount of electricity investment undertaken in an area.
- 2.5. Among other findings, the first phase of the subregional LAEP highlighted capacity constraints as a risk to decarbonisation, and suggested ways forward to address this.
- 2.6. The West London subregional LAEP was the first in London and has led to rollout of Mayoral-funded subregional LAEPs across the capital, with London Councils. It covers the first steps of the LAEP methodology. Boroughs are encouraged to take forward the final steps for their own specific geography. The GLA is supporting boroughs to do this, including potential for funding through the Zero Carbon Accelerator (ZCA). Five West London boroughs have jointly secured ZCA funding to complete the LAEP process for their local geographies (Barnet, Brent, Ealing, Harrow, Hammersmith & Fulham); and Hounslow also has work underway to complete its LAEP.
- 2.7. WLA boroughs have also pooled funding so that the GLA can take forward additional, targeted subregional priority work packages on the back of the subregional LAEP, focused on major drivers of decarbonisation.
- 2.8. WLA's Climate & Net Zero Lead is working closely with the GLA on this, with oversight from the West London Climate, Environment and Net Zero Directors' group, on which all West London boroughs are represented.

3. ANTICIPATED DECISIONS AND NEXT STEPS

- 3.1. No decisions are required at this time.

- 3.2. The GLA will continue to convene utilities to address the capacity constraints and to undertake the follow-on studies funded by WLA boroughs.
- 3.3. WLA boroughs that are not currently undertaking the final steps of the LAEP process might consider the support available through the GLA to facilitate this.

4. **REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 4.1. A complete LAEP is an essential tool to achieve net zero targets and growth; it is a key input into SSEN / UKPN / National Grid plans, to ensure the right investment is undertaken.

5. **POST DECISION IMPLEMENTATION**

N/A

6. **IMPLICATIONS OF DECISION**

N/A

7. **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- Greater London Authority [published updates](#) on West London electricity capacity constraints (most recent March 2024)
- [West London Subregional LAEP Phase One Report](#)